

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the Applicants' Specification as indicated below:

Please replace paragraph [0036] with the following amended paragraph:

[0036] In further process steps V and VI (Fig. 1e, Fig. 1f), the press-hardened component blank 18 is first of all subjected to dry cleaning in a dry-cleaning installation 25 and then covered with a layer 34 which prevents corrosion of the component 1 in a coating process. For this purpose, a plurality of press-hardened component blanks 18, preferably suspended in parallel or lying in series, are introduced into the dry-cleaning installation 25 and, for example, blasted by shot-peening units. The surface of the component blanks 18 is then substantially oxide-free. Next, drums 31 are fed with the cleaned and press-hardened component blanks 18 and a zinc-containing powder, preferably a zinc alloy or a zinc-containing mixture, closed and introduced into a coating installation 30, where the component blanks 18 are heated slowly, at approx. 5-10 ~~K~~^{°C}/min, to approximately 300°C with the drums 31 rotating slowly. During this thermal diffusion process, the zinc or zinc alloy is distributed substantially homogeneously over the entire surface of the component blanks 18 and bonds to the surface.